

REMARKS

Applicants acknowledge the indicated allowability of the subject matter of Claim 3, as set forth at page 4 of the Office Action. In particular, the latter claim would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. However, for the reasons set forth hereinafter, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 3 is allowable in its present dependent form.

By the foregoing amendment, Claims 1-7 have been amended. In addition, new Claims 9-14 have been added. Claims 9 and 10 are supported by the disclosure at paragraph [0021], while Claims 11-14 are supported by the disclosure at paragraph [0022].

Claims 1-7 have been rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, based on the alleged indefiniteness of the term "heatable". In response to this ground of rejection, the word "heatable" has been eliminated from the claims, Claim 1 having been amended to recite that the water carrying media conduits "include a heating component arranged to heat at least a portion thereof". This recitation is supported by the specification at paragraph [0021] and is believed to be clear and definite. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this ground of rejection are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-2 and 4-8 have been rejected under 35 USC §102(e) as anticipated by Katoh et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,124,052). In response to this ground of rejection, Applicants note that Claim 1 as amended recites that the water carrying media conduits include a heating component, which is neither taught nor suggested by Katoh et al. In this regard, it is further noted that the fan 9 in Figure 1 of Katoh et al is a blower for cooling the water tank 7 in order to promote the condensation of water vapor therein. Accordingly, Claim 1 as amended distinguishes over Katoh et al. In addition, independent Claim 7 also recites that a second conduit for providing water to the humidifier unit includes "a conduit section having a heating component for warming said water". The latter feature is also missing from Katoh et al, and accordingly, Claim 7 distinguishes over that reference for the same reasons set forth above. Finally, new dependent Claims 9-14 recite additional details concerning the heating component, and further distinguish over Katoh et al for that reason as well.

In light of the foregoing remarks, this application should be in condition for allowance, and early passage of this case to issue is respectfully requested. If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and

please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit  
Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #1748X/49774).

Respectfully submitted,

  
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